



## PITCHING THE POLOS

The centuries-old Polo Bawa festival is one deep-rooted into the Bangalee culture. Every year during winter, beginning from the Bangla month of Poush till Maagh, when the water levels of various water bodies go down, fishermen and villagers across the country gather near various water bodies in their respective districts to catch small fish together. Celebrated for over 200 years, the month-long festival is announced a week earlier with tin drums to invite everyone. The biggest gathering of this kind, however, takes place in Sylhet districts, due to the abundance of waterbodies there. While many different apparatuses are used for fishing, the most popular one is the Polo -- a bamboo-made fish trap -- thus, the name Polo Bawa. Each day the participants visit different water bodies. Once they all are gathered with their fishing tools, they jump into the water to catch their loads. Meanwhile, hundreds of men, women and children enjoy the competition between those in the water. The photos were taken in Sylhet's Jaintiapur upazila.

PHOTOS: SHEIKH NASIR

